A

BELIEVERS *Last Day* is his *Best Day.*

A

SERMON

Preached at the Funerall of

Mrs MARTHA RANDOLL,

At *Christs* Church, *London*, June 28. 1651.

By *THOMAS BROOKS*, late Minister of the Gospel at St. *Margarets Fish*-street-hill.

Thou wilt guide me by thy Counsel, and after receive me to glory. Psal. 73. 24.

Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. Psal. 97. 11.

Ejus est timere mortem, qui ad Christum nolit ire. *Cyp.*
Timor mortis pejor, quam ipsa mors. *Eras.*
Senibus mors in januis, adolescentibus in insidiis. *Ber.*

LONDON,

Printed, and are to be sold by *John Hancock* at the first Shop in *Popes head*-Alley, next to *Cornhill*. 1665.

To my worthy and beloved Friends

Mr. *John Russel*, and Mris. *Martha* his Wife.

And to Mr. *Thomas Randoll*; all happiness in this world, and that which is to come.

My dear and worthy Friends;

THe ensuing Sermon was preached upon your importunity, & printed also upon the same account; you know nothing would satisfie your spirits but the printing of it, which at last made me unwillingly willing to answer your desires; not that I did delight to deny your desires, nor because I prized it, but because I thought it not good enough for you, nor worthy of that weight that you laid upon it, it being but the fruit of some short broken meditations. I have now published these Notes, which in all love I present unto you; they were once in your ear, they are now in your eye, & the Lord keep them ever in your hearts. If there bee any thing in this Sermon worth the having, it is not mine but the Lords through grace; I know that my best actions stand in need of

sweet

ſweet odours, a golden cenſer.

Dear Friends, You know we muſt all fall in the wilderneſs of this world, bee gathered to our fathers, go hence and be no more ſeen: *Abraham* and *Sarah* muſt part, *Jacob* and *Rachel* muſt be ſeparated, *David* and his childe muſt be ſevered. Our daies are numbred, our period of time appointed, and our bounds we cannot paſs. *All fleſh is as graſſe, and the glory thereof as the flower of the field:* therefore don't mourn as perſons without hope, neither bee like *Rachel* that would not be comforted. To that purpoſe take this counſel.

Firſt, Dwell much upon the ſweet behaviour of others, under the loſs of their near and dear relations. When God had paſſed the ſentence of death upon *Davids* childe, hee *aroſe from the earth, and waſhed, and anointed himſelf, and changed his apparel, and came into the houſe of the Lord, and worſhipped: then he came to his own houſe, and when hee required, they ſet bread before him, and he did eat.* 2 Sam. 12. 20. When his ſervants queſtioned this action, he anſwers, *Now he is dead, wherefore ſhould I faſt: Can I bring him back again? I ſhall go to him, but hee ſhall not return to mee.* Verſe 23. So when *Aarons* ſons were deſtroyed by fire for their offering up ſtrange fire, *Aaron* holds his peace: Levit. 10. 2, 3.

he bridled his passions and submitted sweetly and quietly to divine Justice. So when it was told *Anaxagoras* that both his sons (which were all he had) were dead; being nothing terrified therewith, he answered, * I knew I begat mortal creatures. *Dransi* people in *Thrace*, bury their children with great joy, but at their birth lament grievously, in regard of the miseries that are like to befal them while they live.

* *Sciebam me genuisse mortales.*

Secondly, In time of crosses, losses, and miseries, 'tis the wisdom of believers to look more upon the Crown than upon the Cross, to dwell more upon glory than upon misery, to eye more the brazen Serpent that is lifted up, than the fiery Serpent that bites and stings. *Basil* speaketh of some Martyrs that were cast out all night naked in a cold frosty time, and were to be burned the next day, how they comforted themselves in this manner; *The winter is sharp, but Paradise is sweet*; here wee shiver for cold, but the bosome of *Abraham* will make amends for all. *Gallen* writes of a Fish called *Uranoscopos*, that hath but one eye, and yet looks continually up to heaven: A Christian under the cross should alwaies have an eye looking up to heaven, that so his soul may not faint, and hee may give glory to God in the day of visitation.

2 Cor. 4. 16, 17 18. Heb. 10. 34. & 11. 24, 25, 26, 35. & 12. 1, 2, 3.

Basil ad 40. Martyr.

Tolle cœlum nullus ero, said the Philosopher

on. It is recorded of *Lazarus*, that after his Resurrection from the dead, hee was never seen to laugh, his thoughts and affections were so fixt in Heaven though his body was on Earth, that hee could not but slight temporal things, his heart being set upon eternal things. A man (saith one) would dwell in this contemplation of Heaven and bee loath to come out of it. Nay saith another, a man might age himself in it, and sooner grow old than weary.

Let Heaven be a mans object, and the Earth will be his abject. *Chrysostome.*

Augustine.

Thirdly, Compare your mercies and your losses together, and you shall finde that your mercies will wonderfully outweigh your losses; you have lost one mercy, you enjoy many mercies. What is the loss of a Wife, a Childe, or any other temporal mercy, to a souls enjoyment of the favour of God, pardon of sin, peace of Conscience, hopes of Heaven, *&c.* Besides you enjoy many temporal mercies that many of the precious Sons of *Zion* want, *&c.*

Take special notice of this

Fourthly, Consider seriously of the reasons of Gods stripping his people of their neerest and their dearest mercies; and they are these,

1 For a tryal of the strength and power of their graces. It is not every crosse nor every losse that tries the strength of a Christians graces: *Job* held

God tryed the strength of *Abrahams* faith, & the strength of *Jobs* patience & the strength of *Moses* meekness, and the strength of *Davids* zeal, and the strength of *Pauls* courage, to the utmost. God wil not only try the truth, but he will also try the strength of every Grace that is in a Beleever, sooner or later. Exod. 12, 27, 30, 31. It is the observation of *Theodoret*, that when God smote *Pharaohs* first born, he drew blood of the arm, for the cure of the head; which because it mended not thereupon, all came to confusion.

bravely in the face of many afflictions for a time, but when he was thorowly wet to the skin, then he acts like a man rather void of grace, then like a man that did excel all others in grace. When God burns up the out-houses but leaves the Palace standing; when he takes away the servant but leaves the Childe; when hee gathers here a flower and there a flower out of mens gardens, but leaves the flowers that are the delight of their eyes and the joy of their hearts, they beare it patiently and sweetly: but when hee burns up the Palace, and takes away the childe, and gathers the faireſt flower in all our garden, then we usually shew our selves to be but men, yea to be weak men, passionately crying out: *O my Son Absolom, my Son, my Son Absolom, would God I had died for thee, O Absolom my Son, my Son.*

2 God passes the sentence of death upon mens deareſt mercies, that himself may bee more dreaded, and that his precious servants and their counsel may be the better minded and regarded. The *Ægyptians* trembled not under several judgements, nor minded not what *Moses* and *Aaron* said, till God smote their first-borne, and then they tremble, and then the Servants of the Lord and their counsel found better quarter with them,

then

then formerly they had done. Ah friends, Has the Lord ſmitten your firſt-born (as I may ſay) then look to it (as you tender the honour of God, the advancement of the Goſpel, the peace of your own conſciences, the ſtopping of the mouths of the wicked, and the gladding of thoſe hearts that God would not have ſadded,) that God bee more dreaded, and that his Servants, and his Services be more owned, loved and regarded. The people of God, and the Ordinances of God, are to God as his firſt-borne: and they that make light of Gods firſt-born, God will make as light of their firſt-borne. Theſe *Ægyptians* had ſlain *Iſrael* Gods firſt-borne, and therefore God ſmites their firſt-borne. My deſire and prayer ſhall be, that Gods removing and taking away your firſt-born (as I may ſay) may be the making of more room in your boſomes for God, Chriſt, Saints and Ordinances, that ſo your great loſſe may be turned into the greateſt gain. And certainly, if this phyſick; this potion that is given you by an out-ſtretched hand from heaven don't work this, the next potion will bee far more bitter. John 5.14.

3 God paſſes the ſentence of Death upon mens neareſt and deareſt mercies, that hee may win them to a more com-

pleat and ful dependance upon his bleſſed ſelf: man is a creature apt to hang and reſt upon creature props: *I looked on my right-hand, and beheld* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *but there was no man that would know mee, refuge failed mee, no man cared for my ſoul*, Well, what does he do now, all props fail him? Why now he ſweetly leans upon God. *I cried unto thee O Lord, I ſaid, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the Land of the living.* *Cynegirus* an *Athenian* Captaine uſed great valour in the *Perſian* War, purſuing his enemies that were laiden with the rich ſpoil of his Country, and were ready to ſet Sail and bee gone: he held the Ship with his right hand, and when that was cut off, hee held it with his leſt; that alſo being cut off hee held it with the ſtumps till his arms were cut off, and then hee held it with his teeth till his head was cut off. It is the very temper of moſt men and women in the world, they will hold upon one prop, and if God cut off that, then they wil catch hold on another, *&c.* till God cut off all their props, and then they will come and reſt and centre in God, in whom are all their well-ſprings.

Pſal. 124. 4.

Verſ. 5.

Cynegirus

Pſal. 87. 7.

4 God ſtrips his people of their deareſt mercies, that he may work their hearts to a more ſtrickt and diligent ſearch and examination of their own hearts & ways, that

that they may say with the Church, *Let us search and trye our waies, and turn to the Lord our God.* The Hebrew word, that is rendred *search*, signifies to search as you would doe to finde out a disguised person, that puts himself into a strange habit that hee might not bee discovered. When Gods hand, when Gods rod is upon our backs, our hands must be upon our hearts, and wee must cry out, What evil have we done, what evil have wee done; *Seneca* reports of one *Sextius*, who would every night ask himself three questions; 1. What evil hast thou healed to day? 2. What vice hast thou stood against this day? 3. In what part art thou bettered this day? When the storm beats strong upon you, you had need to see what *Jonah* is asleep at the bottom of your souls, that so he being discovered and cast over-board, your souls may be safe, for in the drowning of your sins lies the security of your soul.

Lam. 3. 39, 40, 48.

חפשה Chaphas.

Reader take notice

5 He strips his people of their dearest outward mercys, that they may be more compassionate toward those that are, or shall bee in the same condition with themselves. The *Jewes* at this day, in their very nuptial feasts and mirth, break a glasse with Wine in remembrance of *Jerusalem*, saying when they throw it down, Thus was *Jerusalem* broken, and what

That sentence likes me well for you, that he said of himself, I have no wit but weeping.

what they spil in wine, they fil with tears. Is it not a shame to have the same name, the same faith, the same Christ, the same profession, &c. and to desire alwaies to tread on Roses, to bee embarked in this great Ship of Christianity with so many brave spirits, and go under hatches to sleep like the out-casts and scorn of humain nature? Saints should be like two Lute strings that are tuned one to another, no sooner one is struck, but the other trembles.

Diogenes taxed the folly of the men of his time that they under valued the best things, but overvalued the worst, ah that this were not the sin & shame of Professors in these dayes.

6 God strips his people of their neareſt and deareſt outward mercies, that they may the more prize and the better taste spiritual and heavenly mercies, he takes away uncertaine Riches, that they may the more prize certain Riches; he takes away natural strength, that they may the more prize spiritual strength; hee takes away the creature, that they may more prize their Saviour. Spiritual and heavenly things are of neareſt and greateſt concernment to you, Spirituals, will only abide with you in all changes, Spirituals can onely satisfie your souls. The language of a gracious Spirit is this; Ah Lord, as what I have if offered to thee pleaseth not thee without my self, so the good things I have from thee, though they may refresh mee, yet they cannot satisfie me without thy self.

John 14. 8.

The

The fifth and last word of counsel that I shall give you, is this, Consider seriously and frequently, that Gods taking away, or removing of one mercy, is but his making of way for another, and usually for a better mercie. Hee took from *David* a *Michal*, and gave him a wife *Abigal*, an *Absolom* and gave him a *Salomon*. Hee tooke away the bodily presence of Christ from his Disciples, but gave them more abundantly of his Spiritual presence, which was far the choicer and the sweeter mercy. God will alwaies make that word good, *I will not leave you Comfortlesse*, or as the Greek hath it, *I will not leave you as Orphans or Fatherlesse Children*, no, I will come and comfort you on every side, and I will make up all your wants, and be better to you than all your mercies. *For your brasse I will give you silver, and for your iron you shal have gold*, &c.

John 16.7,8. *Hujusmodi lucri, dulcis odor*; the smel of this gain, is sweet to many.

John 14.18. ὀρφανὸς, *ab* ὀρφνὴ.

Isa.60.17.

To draw to a close, let that dead man or dead woman be lamented whom hell harboureth whom the Devil devoureth, whom Divine Justice tormenteth: But let those whose departed souls Angels accompany, Christ imbosometh, and all the court of heaven comes forth to welcom, account immortality a mercy, and be grieved that they are so long detained from the sweet company of Christ, &c.

I deſire you (and all others that ſhall read what is here written) to over-look the miſtakes of the Printer, if you meet with any, I having no time to wait upon the Preſſe to correct what may be found amiſs. The peruſal and acceptance of what I here preſent in love, I ſhall leave to your judgements, and reſt,

Yours to love and ſerve

in our deareſt Lord.

THOMAS BROOKS.

A Saints

A Saints Laſt Day is his Beſt Day.

Beloved, I am here at this time to ſpeak a word to the living, my buſineſs being not to ſpeak any thing of the dead. Bee pleaſed therefore to caſt your eye upon

ECCLES. 7. 1.

A good Name is better than precious Ointment, and the day of death, than the day of ones birth.

I Shall ſtand upon the latter part of this Verſe at this time.

And the day of death, than the day of ones birth.

THE *Greeks* ſay, *That the beginning of a mans Nativity, is the begetting of his Miſery.* In *Job* 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is born to trouble and ſorrow.* The Hebrew word that is there rendred (*Born*) ſignifieth alſo generated or conceived, to note to us, that man is miſerable as ſoon as hee is warm in the womb; ילוד *Feludh.*

A fletu vitam auſpicatur, ſaith *Seneca*.

womb; he comes crying into the world. Before ever the child ſpeaks, he Propheſies by his tears of his enſuing ſorrows.

And this made *Solomon* to prefer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his diſſolution before the day of his Coronation. But not to hold you longer from what is mainly intended. The Obſervation that I ſhall ſpeak to at this time, is this,

That a Beleevers last day is his best day, his dying day is better than is birth day.

This will bee a very ſweet and uſeful point to all beleevers. I ſhall firſt demonſtrate the truth that it is ſo, and then make ſome uſe of this point to ourſelves.

The firſt thing that doth with open mouth ſpeak out this truth, is this, That death is a change of place. A Beleever when he dyeth, he doth but change his place; he changeth Earth for Heaven, a Wilderneſs for a *Canaan*, an *Ægypt* for a land of *Goſhen*, a dunghil for a Palace. As it is ſaid of *Judas*, that *hee went to his place*. A ſoul out of Chriſt is not in his place, beneath is his place. So when a beleever dyeth, hee goes to his place, Heaven, the boſome of Chriſt is his place. And that ſpeaks out the truth aſſerted, *That a Beleever's dying day, is his beſt day.*

2 Cor. 5. 6. A believer now is not in his place, but his

his soul is still working and warring, and he cannot rest till he comes to center in the bosome of Christ. This *Paul* well understood, when he said, *I long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* I would fain weigh Anchor, hoise sail, and away home. And upon this account those precious souls groaned for deliverance, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *For this we groan earnestly, desiring to bee cloathed with our house which is from Heaven.* What is the ground? why 'tis this, *While we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord.* We bee not in our place, and therefore we groan to be at home, that is, to be in Heaven, to be in the bosome of Christ; which is our proper place, our most desirable home.

Phil. 1. 23.

Verse 6.

The second thing which doth demonstrate the truth asserted, is this, That death is a change of company. The best that breatheth in this world, must live with the wicked, and converse with the wicked, *&c.* and this is a part of their misery, 'tis their hell on this side Heaven. This stuck upon the spirit of *David*, *Woe is me that I am constrained to bee in Meshek, and to dwell in the Tents of Kedar*, &c. And so *Jer.* 9. 2. *O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them, for they bee all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.* And this was that

Psal. 120. 5. I have read of a good Gentlewoman, who being near death, cryed out, O Lord let me not go to hel, where the wicked are, for thou knowest I never loved their company in the time of life.

that that did vex and tear *Lots* righteous ſoul, 2 *Pet.* 2. 7. 8. *His ſoul was vexed from day to day with their unlawful deeds.* ἐβασάνιζεν, Vide *Beza.* The word ſignifies to *Rack*, he was racked to ſee their unlawful deeds. O but death is a change of company; a man doth change the company of prophane perſons, of vile perſons, *&c.* for the company of Angels, and the company of weak Chriſtians, for the company of juſt men made perfect. That is a remarkable place, Heb. 12. 22, 23. *We are come to Mount Sion* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly* Jeruſalem, *and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the generall Aſſembly, and Church of the firſt born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* Here is a change indeed. Death is a change of company, as well as a change of place. And if this be but well weighed, it muſt needs be granted, *That a beleevers dying day is better than his birth day.*

3 Death is a change of imployment. A believing ſoul when he dies, changeth his work and imployment. I open it thus, The work of a believer in this world lies in praying, groaning, ſighing, mourning, wreſtling, and fighting, *&c.* And we ſee throughout the Scripture, that the choiceſt Saints that have had the higheſt Viſions

sions of God, have driven this trade, they have spent their time in praying, groaning, mourning, wrestling and fighting. *Eph* 6.10 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against Rulers of the darkness of this world; against spirituall wickedness in high places.* The truth is, the very life of a Beleever is a continual warfare; and his business is to bee in the field alwayes: they have to deal with subtle enemies, malicious enemies, wakefull enemies, and watchfull enemies; with such enemies, that threw down *Adam* in Paradise, the most innocent man in the world; and that threw down *Moses*, the meekest man in the world; and *Job* the patientest man in the world; and *Joshua*, the most couragious man in the world; and *Paul*, the best Apostle in the world, *&c.* A Christians life is a warfare, *Job* saith, *All the time of my warfare will I wait till my change come:* I am still a fighting, saith *Job*, with lusts and corruptions within; and with devils and men abroad; *All the time of my warfare will I wait till my change come:* So in the 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *I have fought the good fight of faith*, &c. And so in the 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. *No man that warreth intangleth himself with the affairs of this life, &c.* Death is a change of employ-

Probus a valiant Roman Emperors Motto was, *Pro stipe labor*, no fight, no pay. So say I, no fight, no Crown no fight, no heaven.

Job 14.14. צ כאי

Alexander sent messengers to *Mandanius*, a famous Philosopher, to tell him that if he would do so and so, he should be rewarded; & if he did not, he should be put to death. The Philosopher answered the mes-

messengers, that for his gifts he esteemed them worth nothing, seeing his own Country could furnish him with necessaries & as for death, he did not fear it, but wish it rather, in that it was a change unto a more happy estate. So far did meer Philosophy carry men in the opinion of felicity.

ployment, it changeth this hard service; this work that lies in mourning, wrestling, and fighting; for joying and singing *Hallelujahs* to the Almighty. Now no prayers, but praises, no fighting and wrestling, but dauncing and triumphing. Can a beleeving soul look upon this glorious change, and not say, Surely *Better is the day of a beleevers death, than the day of his birth.* Death is the winding-sheet that wipeth away all tears from the beleevers eyes, *Rev.* 7.9.

Death is a change of injoyments, as well as a change of employments I shall express this in three considerable things.

1 It is a change of our more dark and obscure enjoyments of God, for a more clear and sweet enjoyment of God. I say the best Beleever that breathes in this world, that doth see and enjoy most of God, and the visions of his glory, yet he enjoyes not God so clearly, but that hee is much in the dark. The Apostle *Paul* was a man that was high in his enjoyments of God, yet while hee was here in the flesh; hee did but see as through a glass: We *see through a glass darkly*; but then face to face; then wee shall know even as we are known. God told *Moses* that he could not see his face and live: the truth is, wee are able to bear but little of the discoveries of God, there being

1 Cor. 13. 12. ἀινίγματι. In a riddle.

being such a mighty majesty and glory in all the spiritual discoveries of God. We are weak and able to take in little of God, we have but dark apprehensions of God; witness our tears, sighs, groans, and complaints; because we go forward and backward: We look on the right hand and on the left (as *Job* speaks) and God hideth himself that we cannot see him. *Plutarch* tells of *Eudoxus*, that he would be willing to be burnt up presently by the Sun, so he might be admitted to come so near it as to learn the nature of it. This is upon the heart of believers, Lord let us be burnt up, so we may see thee more in all thy glorious manifestations; let us be poor, let us be any thing, so that we may be taken up into a more clear enjoyment of thy self. Ask them that live highest in the enjoyment of God, What is your greatest burthen? and they will tell you, this is our greatest burthen, that our apprehensions of God are no more clear, that we cannot see him face to face, whom our Souls do dearly love: Oh but now in Heaven Saints shall have a clear vision of God, there be no clouds nor mists in Heaven.

Job 23. 8, 9.

Chrysostom professeth, that the want of the enjoyment of God would be a far greater hell to him, than the feeling of any punishment.

2 It is a change of our imperfect and incompleat enjoyment of God, for a more compleat & perfect enjoyment of him. As no Beleever hath a clear sight

of God here, so no beleever hath a full and perfect sight of God here. In *Job* 26. 14. how little a portion is heard of him (speaking of God) and of that is heard, ah how little a portion is understood! So in 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *Now wee see through a glasse darkly, but then face to face:* Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known. The soul while it is here, dares not but say I enjoy something of God, and that that I would not want for a thousand worlds; yet my enjoyment is not full. If you should say, Souls, why do you wait upon God in this Ordinance, and that Ordinance? they will answer, That we may enjoy God more fully. *Flye away speedily my beloved:* what is the meaning of this language but this; O that I might be filled with the fullness of God. There is no complaints in Heaven, because there is no wants. O! when death shall give the fatal stroke, there shall bee an exchange of earth for heaven, of imperfect enjoyments, for perfect enjoyments of God; then the soul shall be swallowed up with a full enjoyment of God; no corner of the soul shall bee left empty, but all shall bee filled up with the fulness of God: here they receive grace for grace, but in Heaven they shall receive glory for glory. God keeps the best wine till last.

דבר *Dabar, i.e.* A word or thing O how little a word, how little a thing is heard of him?

It is an excellent expression that *Augustine* hath, The good things of eternal life, saith he are so many, that they exceed number; so precious, that they exceed estimation; so great, that they exceed measure. *Esse Christum cum Paulo, magna securitas; esse Paulum cum Christo, summa felicitas,* Bern. For Christ to be with *Paul* was the greatest security, but for *Paul* to be with Christ, was the chiefest felicity.

last; the best of God, Christ and Heaven, is behind: here wee have but some sips, some tastes of God, fulnes is reserved for a glorious state: He that sees most of God here, sees but his back-parts, his face is a Jewel of that splendor and glory, that no eye can behold but a glorified eye: our hearts are like a viol-glass, which will not fill on a sudden, though it lie in the midst of the Sea where all fulnes is. The best Christian is able to take in but little of God, their hearts are like the Widdows vessel that could receive but a little oyle. Sin, the world, and creatures, do take up so much room in the best hearts, that God is put upon giving out himself by a little and little, as parents do to their Children: but in Heaven God will communicate himself fully at once to the soul, grace shall then be swallowed up of glory.

Chrysostom saith If it were possible that all the sufferings of the Saints should be laid upon one man, it were not worth one hours being in heaven. Such is the greatnes and fulnes of that glory above.

The Saints motto is, *Migremus hinc, migremus hinc*, Let us go hence, let us go hence.

3. It is a change of a more inconstant and transient enjoyment of God, for a more constant and permanent enjoyment of God. Here the Saints enjoyment of God is unconstant; one day they enjoy God, and another day the soul sits and complains in anguish of Spirit. He that should comfort my soul stands a far off, my glass is out, my Sun is set, and what can make up the want of this Sun? as all candle-light, Star-light, and torch-

By death Saints come to a fixed and invariable eternity. *Neſcio qui.erit, quod iſta vita non orit,&c. Aug.i.e.* What will that life be or rather what will not that life be, ſince all good either is not at all, or is in ſuch a life? Light, which place cannot comprehend; Noiſes, & Muſick which time cannot vaniſh away; Odours which are never diſſipated, a Feaſt which is never conſumed a bleſſing which eternity beſtoweth, but eternity ſhall never be at an end.

light, cannot make up the want of the light of the Sun; So when the Sun of Righteouſneſs hides his face, it is not all creature comforts that can make up the want of his Countenance. *David* ſometimes could ſay, that *God was his portion, and his ſalvation, and his ſtrong Tower*; and what not? and yet preſently cries out, *Why art thou caſt downe, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within mee?* In one place he ſaith, *I ſhall never bee moved*, and yet preſently it follows, *Thou hideſt thy face from mee, and I was troubled.* And this is the ſtate of a Believer in this world. But in Heaven there ſhall no clouds ariſe between the Lord and a believing heart: God will not one day ſmile, and another day frown, one day take a ſoul in his arms, and another day lay that ſoul at his feet; This is his dealing with his people here. But in Heaven there is nothing but kiſſes and embraces, nothing but a perpetual enjoyment of God. When once God takes the ſoul unto himſelf, it ſhal never be night with it any more; never dark with that ſoul more, *&c.* all tears ſhall then be wiped away. That is a ſweet word in the 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. 18. *And ſo ſhall wee bee ever with the Lord, wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.* There are, ſaith *Muſculus*, Angels and Arch-Angels in Heaven; I but

but they dee not make Heaven, Christ is the most sparkling Diamond in the Ring of glory. It is Heaven and happiness enough to see Christ, and to be for ever with Christ. Now, O what a glorious change is this? Methinks these things should make us long for our dying day: and account this life but a lingering death.

There is nothing excellent that is not perpetual, saith *Gr. Nazianz.* Philosophers could say, that he was never a happy man that might afterwards become miserable 1 Sam. 16. Psal. 42. Psal. 30. 6, 7. Eternity is that *unum perpetuum bodie.*

5 Consider this, Death is a change that puts an end to all external and internal changes? What is the whole life of a man but a life of changes? Death is a change that puts an end to all external changes: here you change your joy for sorrow, your health for sickness, your strength for weakness, your honour for dishonour, your plenty for poverty, your beauty for deformity, your friends for foes, your silver for brass, and your gold for copper: Now the comforts of a man are smiling, the next hour they are dying, *&c.* All temporals are as transitory as a hasty, headlong torrent, a ship, a bird, an arrow, a post, that passeth by. Man himself, the King of these outward comforts, what is he but a meer nothing? the dream of a dream, a shadow, a bubble, a flash, a blast. Now death puts an end to all external changes: there shall bee no more sickness, no more complaints, no more wants, *&c.*

How vain then is pride and conceit

And then it puts an end to all internal changes.

Now the Lord ſmiles upon the Soul, and anon he frowns upon the ſoul. Now God gives aſſiſtance to conquer ſin, anon the man is carried captive by his ſin; now he is ſtrengthned againſt the temptation, anon he falls before the temptation, *&c. Job* carried it out bravely in the midſt of ſtormes, and ſpeakes like an Angel: But when *Job* was wet to the skin, and the Arrows of the Almighty ſtuck in him, and his day was turned into night, and his rejoycing into mourning, *&c.* then a man would have thought him a Devil incarnate by his curſing. But death puts an end to internal changes, as well as external changes: Now the ſoul ſhall bee tempted no more, ſin no more, bee foiled no more. Now you may judge by this, that a Chriſtians dying day, is his beſt day. Death is another *Moſes*, it delivers believers out of bondage, and from making Brick in *Ægypt*. It is a day, or year of Jubilee to a gracious Spirit, the year wherein hee goes out free from all thoſe cruel task maſters, which it had long groaned under. The Heathen Gods held Death to bee mans *ſummum bonum*, his chiefeſt good; therefore when one of them had built and dedicated the Temple at *Del-*

phos,

phos, hee asked of *Apollo* for his recompence the thing that was best for man: the Oracle told him that hee should goe home, and within three daies he should have it; within which time hee dyed; Thus the very Heathens themselves have consented to this truth, That a mans dying day is his best day.

6. Death is a change that brings the soul to an unchangeable Rest, it is a bringing of the soul to bed, to a state of eternal rest. That is the last demonstration of the point, that a Believers dying day is his best day. Now while wee are here the soul is in a toss. The best man in the world that is highest and clearest in his enjoyments of God, is too often like to *Noahs* Dove, that found no rest? either he wants some external mercy, or internal mercy, and will doe so till the soul bee swallowed up in the everlasting enjoyments of God: But death brings a man to an unchangeable rest. In *Rev.* 14. 13. *I heard a voice from Heaven saying to mee, Write, From henceforth blessed are the Dead that dye in the Lord*; Why? *for they rest from their labours*, &c. O, saith hee; Write it down as a thing of worth and weight, *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, for they rest from their labours*, &c. Death brings the soul to unchangeable rest. In *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. *The*

Death is a rest from the trouble of our particular callings; it is a rest from afflictions, a rest from persecutions, a rest from temptation, a rest from desertion, a rest from sin, and a rest from sorrow. Gen. 8. 8.

The Righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart, &c. Hee shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their Beds, each one walking in his uprightnesse. O! Death is a change that brings a Soul to unchangeable rest, it brings a Soul abed. This was that, that made *Paul* long to *bee dissolved, and to bee with Christ*; And the *Corinthians* to groan for deliverance. It was a notable saying of blessed *Cooper*, many a day have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience or distrust (saith hee) but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it. You know how the Martyrs hugged the stake, and welcomed every messenger of death that came to them, and clap'd their hands in the midst of the flames. Death is a believers Coronation day, it is his marriage-day, it is a rest from sin, a rest from sorrow, a rest from afflions and temptations, *&c.* Death to a believer is an entrance into *Abrahams* bosome, into Paradise, into the *new Jerusalem*, into the joy of his Lord. And thus much for the Doctrinal part: You see that it is clear by these sixe things, *That a Believers dying day is his best day*, and *the day of his death, better than the day of his birth.*

Lawrence Saunders kissing the stake, said Welcome the crosse of Christ, welcome everlasting life. *Funius* the Italian Martyr, kissed him that brought him word of his execution.

I might by many other arguments demonstrate this truth to you, but let these suffice,

ſuffice, becauſe I would not willingly keep you longer from the uſe and Application of the point: Application being the life of all teaching. Now the

First Uſe ſhall be this. Then never mourn immoderately at the death of any believer, let them be the moſt excellent and uſeful that ever lived. Death is to them the greateſt gain; and it ſpeakes out much ſelfiſhneſs in us to bee more taken with the gain and benefit that redounds to us by their lives, then with the happineſs and glory that redounds to them by their deaths. In the Primitive times, when God had paſt the Sentence of Death upon their deareſt comforts, Chriſtians did carry it at a more high, ſweet, and noble rate, then now adaies they do. Remember this, death doth that (I ſay) in a moment, that no graces, no duties, nor no ordinances could do for a man all his life time, it frees a man from thoſe diſeaſes, corruptions, temptations, *&c.* that no Duties, nor Graces, nor Ordinances could do. When *Abraham* came to mourn for his deceaſed *Sarah*, hee mourned moderately for her, as is imported by a ſmall Caph in the word *Libcothath*, that ſignifies to weep, in that Hebrew word there is one little letter extraordinary, to note that *Abraham* wept but a little for her, not becauſe

Death is not *mors hominis*, but *mors peccati*, not the death of the man, but the death of his ſin. Gen. 23. 2.

לִבְכֹּתָהּ

cause shee was old and overworne (as some Rabbins say) but because her dying day was her best day. When *Luther* that famous instrument of God buried his daughter, hee was not seen to shed a tear. So Mr. *Wheatly* (who was famous in his time) when as he had preached his own childes Funeral Sermon upon this Subject, *The Will of the Lord bee done*, Hee and his Wife laid their own Childe in the grave. That is the first Use, let us not mourn immoderately for any Believers death.

The people in *Thrace*, mourn & greatly lament at the birth of their children, because of the sorrows & troubles they are born to, & they greatly joy & rejoyce at the death of their children, because Death is the funeral of all their sorrows. Death is not such to you, as some would paint it,

Then in the next place, fear not death; Compose your Spirits, say not of death, as that wicked Prince said to the Prophet, *Hast thou found mee, O my Enemy?* but rather long for it, not to be rid of troubles, but that the soul may be taken up to a more clear, and full enjoyment of God. Your dying day is your best day. Good *Jacob* dies with a sweet composed spirit, he calls for his Children, and blesseth, and kisseth them, and gathers up his feet into his Bed, and dies. *Moses* that morning that the Messenger came to him, and told him hee must die, hee goes up the hill, sees the Land of *Canaan* at a distance, and dies. *Cato* a Heathen man told *Cæsar*, that hee feared his pardon more than the pain that hee threatned: *Joseph* built his Sepulchre in his own Gar-

It was the saying of an heathen man, That the whole life of a man should be nothing else but (*Meditatio mortis*) a meditation of death.

garden. And some Philosophers had their graves alwaies open before their gates, that going out and coming in, they might alwaies think of death, for in life they found comforts to be rare, crosses frequent, pleasures momentany, and pains permanent. Beleevers, your dying day is your best day; Oh then be not afraid of death, and that you may not, remember that it is not such a slight matter as some make it, to be unwilling to dye: There is much reproach cast upon God by beleivers being unwilling to dye; you talk much of God, Heaven, and Glory, *&c.* and yet when you should come to go and share in this glory, you shrug, and say, Spare me a little: Is not this a reproach to the God of glory? But that this counsell may stick upon you, remember these five things.

See Deut. 32. 29. *Alexander* the Great, did ask the Indian Philosopher how long a man should live; saith he, untill he think it better to dye than to live.

1 Christs Death is a meritorious Death. Can a beleever think upon the death of Christ, as meriting peace with God, pardon of sin, justification, glorification, and yet be afraid to dye? What, Is the death of Christ thus meritorious, and shall wee still bee unwilling to depart?

2 Is not death a sword in your Fathers hand? It is true, a sword in a mad mans hand, or in an enemies hand, might make one tremble, but when the sword is

is in the fathers hands, the childe doth not fear. Grant that death is a sword, yet why should the childe fear and be afraid, when it is in the fathers hand, that will bee sure to handle it so as hee shall not be hurt or cut by it.

3 Remember that Christs death is a death conquering death; he hath taken away the sting of death, that it cannot hurt you; and his death is a death sanctifying, and a death-sweetning death; he hath by his death sanctified and sweetned death to us.

Death is a fall that came by a fall, to dye is to be no more unhappy, if we consider death aright; O (saith one) that I could see death, not as it was, but as thou Lord hast now made it, it is the greatest Monarch, and the ancientest King of the world; Death raigned from *Adam* to *Moses*, saith St. *Paul*, oh but the Lord Jesus hath as it were disarmed death, and tryumpht over death, he hath taken away its sting, so that it cannot sting us, and we may play with it, and put it into our bosomes, as we may a snake whose sting is pulled out. The Apostle upon this consideration, challengeth death, and out-braves death, and bids death do his worst, in that, 1 *Cor.* 15. 56, 57.

4 Did not Christ willingly leave his fathers bosome for your sake? Did hee not

The fear of death is worse than the pains of death (*Timor mortis ipsa morte pejor*) because fear of death kils us often, whereas death it self can do it but once. *Ejus est timere mortem qui ad Christum nolit ire, Cyp.* Let him fear death that is loath to go to Christ. *Mori non metuo, sed damnari metuo,* I fear not to dy, but I fear to be damned, saith one.

Una guttula plus valet quam Cœlum et terra. Luther, Speaking of the blood of Christ, saith, that one little drop is more worth then heaven and earth.

not willingly dye for you; did Christ plead thus, These robes are too good for me to leave off, this Crown too glorious for me to lay aside, I am too great to suffer for such a people? No, but hee readily leaves his fathers bosome, he laies down his Crown, and puts off his robes, and suffers a cursed, cruel, and ignominious death. Ah Souls, you should reason thus, Did Christ dye for me that I might live with him? I will not therefore desire to live long from him, all men go willingly to see him whom they love, and shall I bee unwilling to dye, that I may see him whom my soul loves? Shall Christ lay by all his glory and pomp, and marry a poor soul that had neither portion nor proportion: and shall this soul bee unwilling to go home to such a Husband? O think of it you souls that are unwilling to dye.

If the souls under the Altar, cry *usq; quo Domine*, how long Lord, if they solicite for the day of judgement, why not I for the day of death, since deaths day is but the Eeve of Gods day. *Zeno* said, I have no fear but of old **Age.**

Present life is not (*vita, sed via ad vitam*) life, but the way to life; for when we cease to bee men, we begin to bee as Angels, they are only creatures of inferiour nature that are pleased with the present: Man is a future creature, the eye of his soul looks back, the Labourer hastens from his work to his bed, the Marriner rows hard to gain the port, the traveller is glad when he is near his Inn, so should Saints when they are near death,

death, because then they are near heaven, they are near their Inne.

5 Are you not compleat in Christ? why should a beleever be afraid to dye, that stands compleat before God in the righteousnes of the Lord **Jesus**? If we should appear in our own righteousnes, in our own duties, it would bee dreadful to think of dying, but a beleever is compleat in him, *&c. Ye are compleat in him*, Col. 2. 10. In *Revelat.* 14. 4, 5. they are said to bee *without fault before the Throne of God.* And in *Cant.* 4. 7. *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no spot in thee*: A beleever when hee dies, he appears before God in the righteousnes of Christ; all the spots and blemishes of his soul are covered with the Righteousnes of Christ, which is a matchles, spotles, pearles righteousnes. Christs Spouse hath perfection of beauty, shee is all glorious within and without; shee is spotles and blameles, she is the faireſt among women, that she may be a meet mate for him that is fairer than all the children of men, *Psalm* 45. 2. The Saints are as that Tree of Paradise, *Gen.* 3. fair to his eye, and pleasant to his palate, or as *Absalom* in whom there was no blemish from head to foot, think of these things to sweeten your last changes, and to make you long

Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, quia in ipso uno bono, bona sunt omnia Aug. one Christ will be to thee instead of all things else, because in him are all good things to be found.

to

to be in the bosome of Christ.

Sixthly, consider that the Saints dying day is to them the Lords pay day. Every Prayer shall then have its answer, all hungerings and thirstings shall bee filled and satisfied; every sigh, groan and tear that hath fallen from the Saints eyes, shall then bee recompenced. Then they shall bee paid and recompenced for all publick service, and all family service, and all closet service. Now a Crown shal bee set upon their heads, and glorious Robes put upon their backs, and golden Scepters put into their hands, their dying day being the Lords pay-day, they shall hear the Lord saying to them, *Well done good and faithful servants, enter into your Masters joy.* In that day they shall find that God is not like *Antiochus*, who promised often, but seldome gave; no, Then God wil make good all those golden and glorious Promises that he hath made to them, especially those that are cited in the margent. * Now God wil give them gold for brass, and silver for Iron, felicity for misery, plenty for poverty, honour for dishonour, freedome for bondage, Heaven for Earth, an immortal Crown for a mortal Crown.

That is not death, but life, that joyns the dying man to Christ; and that is not life, but death, which separates the living man from Christ.

* Rev. 3. 10. & 3, 4, 12. 22. & 7. 16, 17.

Seventhly, consider this, The way to glory is by misery, the way to life is by death. In this world we are all *Benonies*,

the Sons of sorrow, the way to Heaven is by weeping Cross; Christs passion-week was before his ascension-day; none passeth to Paradise but by burning Seraphims, we cannot go out of *Ægypt*, but through the Red-Sea; the Children of *Israel* came to *Jerusalem* through the Valley of tears, and crossed the swift River of *Jordan* before they came to the sweet waters of *Siloam*. There is no passing into Paradise, but under the flaming Sword of this Angel death; there is no coming to that glorious City above, but through this strait, dark, dirty lane; no wiping all tears from your eyes, but with your winding-sheet, which should make you entertain death (*Non ut hostis, sed ut hospes*) not as a foe, but as a friend, not as a stranger, but as a guest that you had long looked for, and bid welcome death more blessed than your birth. Every man is willing to go to his home, though the way that leads to it be never so dark, dirty and dangerous, and shall believers be unwilling to go to their homes, because they are to go through a dark entry to those glorious lightsome & eternal Mansions that Christ hath prepared for them? surely no.

A man will easily swallow a bitter Pill to get health. The Physitian helps us not without pain, and yet we reward him for it.

Death to a Believer is the gate of Heaven, it is (*Janua vitæ*) the door of life, it conveys us out of the Wilderness into *Canaan*, out of a troublesome Sea, into a quiet Haven. John 14. 1, 2, 3.

Eighthly, consider, That while we are in this world, our weak and imperfect and diseased bodies cast chains, and fetters,

ters, restraints, hindrances, and impediments upon the soul, that the soul is hindred from many high and noble actings, which in a state of separation it is free to. In a state of separation the soul works clearer, and understands better, and discourses wiser, and rejoyces louder, and loves noblier, and desires purer, and hopes stronger then it can do here.

When *Plato* saw one over indulgent to his body, by high feeding it, hee ask'd him what he meant to make his prison so strong.

'Tis reported of *Apollonius*, That hee had a familiar Spirit engaged in a Jewel. Such is the soul of man in the body; the soul while it is in this body of clay, cannot act like her self, like a spirit whose nature is to soar aloft towards the place whence she came. When the soul is upon the wings for Heaven, the body like a lump of lead pulls it down to the Earth, *&c.*

Now the soul cannot look out at the eyes, but it will be infected, nor hear by the ear, but it will be distracted, nor smell at the nostrils, and not be tainted, tast by the tongue, and not be allured, and touch by the hand, and not be defiled. Every sense and member is too ready upon every occasion and temptation, to betray the soul, which should make us willing to die, and to long for that day, wherein our bodies shall be glorified.

The Greeks call the body the souls bond, the souls Sepulchre.

Ah Believers, it will be but as a day before those bodies of your, that are now

like a Picture out of frame, or a house out of repair that are now deformed, and diseased, &c. shall bee agil and nimble,
Mar. 17. 2. swift and facil in their motion, for clarity and brightness they shall be like Christs body when it was transfigured, they shal be very amiable and beautiful, they shal be impassible and immortal. Here our bodies are still dying. It is more proper to ask when we shall make an end of dying, then to ask when we shal dye. Death is a worm that is alwaies feeding at the Root of our lives, which should make death more desirable then life.

Ninthly, Dwell much upon the readiness and willingness of other Saints, to
Luke 2. 28,29, 30. dye. Good old *Simeon* having first laid Christ in his heart, and then taking him up in his arms, he sings; *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* I have lived enough, I have my life; I have long'd enough, I have my love; I have seen enough, I have my sight; I have serv'd enough, I have my reward. I have for-
2 Cor. 5. rowed enough, I have my joy. So the believing *Corinthians*, they groaned earnestly to bee cloathed upon with th i house which is from Heaven, they groaned that mortality might bee swallowed up of life, and *that they might bee absent from the body, and present with the Lord.*

So

So *Paul* desires earnestly *to bee dissolved, and to bee with Christ, which is best of all.* So those in *Peter, they look for, and hasten the comming of the Day of God.* They are said to hasten the day of God, in respect of their earnest desires after it, and in respect of their preparations for it. So the souls under the Altar, cry, *How long Lord, how long? &c.*

Phil. 1. 23.
2 Pet. 3. 12.

Rev. 6. 9, 10.

So *Paula*, that Noble Lady, when one did read to her, *Cant.* 2. 11. *The Winter is past, and the singing of Birds is come.* *Yea*, she replyed, , *The singing of Birds is come*, and so she went singing into Heaven. So *Jewel*, *Lord now let thy Servant depart in peace, break off all delayes, Lord receive my Spirit.* Further he said, *I have not so lived, that I am ashamed to live longer; neither do I fear to dye, because wee have a merciful Lord, a Crown of Righteousness is laid up for mee. Christ is my righteousnesse.* So another being in a swound, (as her friends thought) a little before her end, they cried give her some *Rosa solis*, but she put it back, saying: *I have Rosa solis you know not of.* So Mr. *Pearing* a little before his death, said: *I finde and feel so much inward Joy and Comfort in my soul, that if I were put to my choice whether to dye or live, I would a thousand times rather chuse death than life, if it might stand with the holy Will of God.* So

Let all the Devils in Hell (saith *Augustine*) beset me round, let fasting macerate my body, let sorrows oppress my minde, let pains consume my flesh, let watching dry me or heat scorch me, or cold freeze me; let all these, and what can come more, happen unto me, so I may enjoy my Saviour.

Mr. *Bolton* lying on his death bed, said, *I am by the wonderful mercyes of God, as full of comfort as my heart can hold, and feel nothing in my soul but Christ, with whom I heartily desire to be.* Ah Christians! if the exceeding willingnes of the Saints to dye, will not make you willing to dye, what will?

Tenthly and lastly, consider this, that the Lord will not leave thee, but be with thee in that hour. *Yea though I walke through the Valley of the shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with mee, thy rod and they staffe they comfort mee,* saith the Psalmist. So the Apostle, *Let your conversation be without covetousnes, and bee content with such things as you have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* There are five Negatives in the Greek, to assure Gods people, that he will never forsake them, five times in Scripture is this precious promise renewed, that wee may press it till we have pressed the sweetnesse out of it. Though God may seem to leave thee, thou maist be confident he will never forsake thee. Why should that man be afraid of death, that may bee alwaies confident of the presence of the Lord of life?

Psal. 23. 4. Heb. 13. 5. *Maximilian* the Emperor was so delighted with that sentence, *Si Deus nobiscum*, If God be with us, who shall be against us, that he caused it to be written upon the walls in most rooms of his Palace.

The next Use shall bee to stir you all up to prepare and fit for your dying day. Ah Christians, what is your whole life, but

a day to fit for the hour of death? what is your great businesse in this world, but to prepare and fit for another world? It was a sad speech of *Cæsar Borgias*, who being sick to death, said, *When I lived I provided for every thing but death, now, I must dye, and am unprovided to dye.* Ah Christians, you have need every day to pray with *Moses*, *Lord teach us to number our daies, that wee may apply our hearts to wisdome*, And to follow the counsel of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Give glory to the Lord your God, before hee cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the darke Mountains, and while yee look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it grosse darkenesse.* Old age is the dark mountain which makes a broad way narrow, and a plain way cragged. It is a high point of Heavenly wisdome to consider our latter end. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.* *Jerusalem* paid dear for forgetting her latter end. *Jerusalems* filthinesse was in her skirts, because she remembred not her latter end. therefore also she came down wonderfully. To provoke you to prepare and fit for a dying day, consider seriously these following things.

Psal. 90. 13.

Jer. 13. 16.

Deut. 23. 19.

James 1. 9.

1. He that prepares not for his dying day, runs the hazard of losing his im-

Aut pœnitendâ aut pereundum.

mortal soul. Though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is seldome true. The Heathen man could say. *Hee that is not ready to repent to day, will bee lesse ready to morrow; his understanding will bee more darke, his heart more hard, his will more crooked, his affections more distempered, his conscience more benummed*, &c. *Beda* tells a story of a certain great man, that was admonished in his sickness to repent, who answered, *That he would not yet, for if he should recover, his companions would laugh at him*; but growing sicker and sicker, his friends pressed him again to repent, but then he told them, it was too late (*Quia jam judicatus sum & condemnatus*) *For now* (said hee) *I am judged and condemned.* It is the greatest wisdome in the world, to do that every day, that a man would do on a dying day. And to be afraid to live in such an estate as a man would be afraid to dye in. Ah souls, you are afraid to dye in such and such sins, and wil you not be afraid to live in those sins?

2 Again, the certainty of death should bespeak you to prepare for death. When we would affirm any thing to be infallibly true, we say, *As sure as death. It is appointed* (saith the Apostle) *unto men once to dye, but after this the Judgement.* The Greek word that is translated; *It is*

Heb. 9. 27.

appointed,

appointed, signifieth, it lyeth as a mans lot: *Once*, implies two things. 1 A certainty, it shall once be. 2 A singularity, it will be but once, *What man lives and shall not see death?* (saith the Psalmist) That is, no man lives and shall not see death. In *Job* the Grave is called, *The house appointed for all the living.* *Salomon* calls the Grave (*Baiith Gnelam*, i.e. *Domum seculi*) *The House of age*; the Learned Translate it *Long home*, where men must abide for a long time, even till the Resurrection. To live without fear of death is to dye living; to labour not to dye, is labour in vain. Death hath for its Motto, *Nulli cedo, I yield to none.* 'Tis decreed, that *all must dye.* Every mans death-day, is his dooms-day.

ἀπόκειται.

Psal. 89. 48.

Job 30. 23. Eccles. 12. 5.

בית עולם

The *French* have a Proverb, *Three things* (say they) *agree in the World, the Priest, the Lawyer, and Death.* The Priest takes the living and the dead, the Lawyer right and wrong, and Death the weak and strong. But the Jewes have a better, *In Golgotha are to bee seen skulls of all sizes*; that is, Death comes on the young as wel as the old, the Lot is fallen upon all, and therefore all must die. All men are made of one mould and matter. *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. All have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God*, and therefore death must pass upon all.

Adam of *Admah, homo ab humo*

Gen. 3. 19. Rom. 5. 12.

3 The

Aut pœnitendâ aut pereundum.

mortal soul. Though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is seldome true. The Heathen man could say. *Hee that is not ready to repent to day, will bee lesse ready to morrow; his understanding will bee more darke, his heart more hard, his will more crooked, his affections more distempered, his conscience more benummed*, &c. *Beda* tells a story of a certain great man, that was admonished in his sickness to repent, who answered, *That he would not yet, for if he should recover, his companions would laugh at him*; but growing sicker and sicker, his friends pressed him again to repent, but then he told them, it was too late (*Quia jam judicatus sum & condemnatus*) *For now* (said hee) *I am judged and condemned.* It is the greatest wisdome in the world, to do that every day, that a man would do on a dying day. And to be afraid to live in such an estate as a man would be afraid to dye in. Ah souls, you are afraid to dye in such and such sins, and wil you not be afraid to live in those sins?

2 Again, the certainty of death should bespeak you to prepare for death. When we would affirm any thing to be infallibly true, we say, *As sure as death. It is appointed* (saith the Apostle) *unto men once to dye, but after this the Judgement.* Heb. 9. 27. The Greek word that is translated; *It is appointed*,

appointed, ſignifieth, it lyeth as a mans lot: *Once*, implies two things. 1 A certainty, it ſhall once be. 2 A ſingularity, it will be but once, *What man lives and ſhall not ſee death?* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) That is, no man lives and ſhall not ſee death. In *Job* the Grave is called, *The houſe appointed for all the living.* *Salomon* calls the Grave (*Baiith Gnelam*, i.e. *Domum ſeculi*) *The Houſe of age*; the Learned Tranſlate it *Long home*, where men muſt abide for a long time, even till the Reſurrection. To live without fear of death is to dye living; to labour not to dye, is labour in vain. Death hath for its Motto, *Nulli cedo, I yield to none.* 'Tis decreed, that *all muſt dye.* Every mans death-day, is his dooms-day.

ἀπόκειται.

Pſal. 89. 48.

Job 30. 23. Eccleſ. 12. 5.

בֵּית עוֹלָם

The *French* have a Proverb, *Three things* (ſay they) *agree in the World, the Prieſt, the Lawyer, and Death.* The Prieſt takes the living and the dead, the Lawyer right and wrong, and Death the weak and ſtrong. But the Jewes have a better, *In Golgotha are to bee ſeen skulls of all ſizes*; that is, Death comes on the young as wel as the old, the Lot is fallen upon all, and therefore all muſt die. All men are made of one mould and matter. *Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return.* *All have ſinned, and fallen ſhort of the glory of God*, and therefore death muſt paſs upon all.

Adam of *Admah*, *homo ab humo* Gen. 3. 19. Rom. 5. 12.

3 The

3 The uncertainty of the time of your death do's bespeak you with open mouth to be in a constant readiness and preparedness for death. No man knows when he shall dye, nor what kind of death he shall dye, whether a natural or a violent death. *Augustus* dyed in a Complement. *Tiberius* in dissimulation. *Galba* with a sentence. *Vespatian* with a jest. *Zeuxes* dyed laughing at the picture of an old woman which he drew with his owne hand. *Sophocles* was choaked with the stone of a Grape. *Diodorus* the Logician dyed for shame, that he could not answer a jocularey Question propounded at the Table by *Stilpo*. *Joannes Masius* preaching upon the raising of the woman of *Naomi's* Son from the dead, within three hours after dyed himself. *Felix* Earl of *Wartenberg*, sitting at Supper with many of his Friends, some at the Table fell into discourse about *Luther*, and the peoples general receiving his Doctrine, upon which the Earl swore a great Oath: *That before hee dyed he would ride up to the spurs in the blood of Lutherans*; but the very same night, God stretched out his hand so against him, that he was choaked with his own blood.

Bibulus a Roman General riding in tryumph in all his glory, a Tyle fell from a house in the street, and beat out his brains.

Consider in the last place, That it is a solemn thing to dye. Death is a solemn parting of two near friends, soul and body.

dy. Remember, all other preparations are to no purpose, if a man be not prepared to dye. What will it avail a man to prepare this and that for his Children, Kindred, or Friends, *&c.* when he hath made no preparations for his soul, for his eternal wel-being? As death leaves you, so Judgement shall finde you. If death take you before you expect it, and are prepared for it, it will be the more terrible to you, it will cause your countenance to be changed, your thoughts to be troubled, your loins to be loosed, and your knees to be dashed one against another. Oh the Hell of horrors and terrors that attends those souls that have their greatest worke to doe when they come to dye; therefore as you love your souls, & as you would be happy in death, and everlastingly blessed after death, prepare and fit for death. Look that you build upon nothing below Christ, look that you have a real interest in Christ, looke that you dye daily to sin, to the world, and to your own righteousnes. Look that conscience be alwayes waking, speaking, and tender; Look that Christ be your Lord and Master; Look that all reckonings stand right betwixt the Lord and your souls; Look that you be fruitful, faithful and watchful, and then your dying day shall bee to you as the day of harvest

He that prepares for his body and friends, but neglects his soul, is like him that prepares for his slave, but neglects his Wife.

When I was young, (saith *Seneca* the Heathen) I then studied, *Artem bene vivendi*, the Art of living well, when Age came upon me, I then studied *Artem bene moriendi*, the Art of dying well.

harvest to the Husband-man, as the day of deliverance to the prisoner, as the day of Coronation to the King, and as the day of Marriage to the Bride. Your dying day shall be a day of Triumph and exaltation, a day of freedom and consolation, a day of rest and satisfaction. Then the Lord Jesus shall bee as Honey in the mouth, Oyntment in the nostrils, musick in the ear, and a Jubilee in the heart.

A great man wrote thus a little before his death, *Spes & fortuna valete.* Hope and Fortune farewel.

The last Use then is this, If a Believers last day be his best-day, then by the Rule of contraries, a wicked mans last day must be his worst day, for he must there lie downe with the sins of his youth. Death shall put an end to all the benefits and comforts that now thou enjoyest. Now thou must say, honours, friends, pleasures, riches, credit, *&c.* farewel for ever, I shall never have good day more, I shall never be merry more; my Sun is set, my glass is out, my hopes fail, my heart fails; all offers of grace are past, the Spirit will never strive with me more, free grace will never move me more, the golden Scepter shall never be held forth more, death will be an inlet to judgement, yea, to an eternity of misery. What the voice was of God to *Adam* upon eating the forbidden fruit, what the coming of the flood was to the prophane men of the old world, what the waters of

Sigismund the Emperor, and *Lewes* the 11th of *France*, straitly charged all their servants, that they should not dare to name that bitter word Death, when they saw them sick, so dreadful was the very thoughts of death to them.

of the Red Sea were to *Pharaoh* and his Army, what the fire from Heaven was to the Captains that came up against *Eliah*, what the burning Furnace was to them that cast in *Shadrach*, *Meshech*, and *Abednego*, the same will be the day of Death to prophane wicked souls. Ah sinners, my prayer for you shall be, That the Lord would awaken you, and set up a choice light in your souls, that you may see where you are, and what you are; that he would give you to break off your sins by repentance, and give you an interest in himself, that so *For you to live may be Christ, and to dye may bee gain.* That *in life and death Christ may bee advantage to you*; and that death may be the Funeral of all your sins and sorrows, and an inlet to all that joy and pleasure, that blessedness and happiness that is at Gods right hand.

Christian Reader;

BE pleased to pass by, or to Correct with thy pen, the faults that have escaped, by reason of the Authors absence from the Press.

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